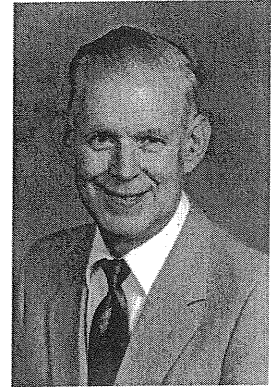


Roger Grein – An Overview

Roger Grein made the trip from the St. Joseph Infant Home in the early spring of 1943. He was 6 months old and disabled. His adoptive parents, Frank and Thelma Grein, didn't know of the disability. Frank went away to war and Thelma, alone, learned of her son's permanent handicaps. He might not walk, the doctors said. He might not talk. And he might never know her.



Some encouraged Thelma to return the child. To take him back in exchange for another. But she didn't. She kept him and loved him and every day carried him about the town. "Heel-toe," she said to him, and she set him down and held him upright and together they walked along. "Heel-toe," she said, "heel-toe," and Roger thought out every step and after several years he learned to walk. And then to run. And then to ride a bike.

In school, Roger went out for all the teams. He fell and tripped and never came close to earning a spot. But the coach, seeing the boy's effort, put his arm around him and asked if he might consider helping out for a while. Chalking the base lines. Collecting the towels. Fetching the water. Roger accepted, and for the next six years he served as team manager. He never did learn to swing a bat, but his Lockland years of "water boy" set the stage for something bigger: a 36-year coaching career that saw him leading softball teams to world championships and travels to Hawaii, Mexico, Sweden and the former Soviet Union.

Roger was also never expected to excel mentally. Don't expect too much, the doctors said. And in his first years at school he did struggle. But by applying the same determination he had used to first walk – heel-toe, heel-toe – he slowly but doggedly mastered his studies. He graduated from high school and then, in just three years, from college as well.

Still his handicap, or the perception of it, trailed behind him. An old teacher landed him a bank job, but he was soon fired because he didn't fit in. And despite his degree, no one else would hire him. He cut grass for a living. He earned an MBA and cut grass. He was the MBA yardman.

But Roger didn't give up. He handed out business cards to his lawn customers. Let me do your tax returns, he said. A few dowagers accepted his offer, and then a few more. And his teachers began dropping by. And his old coach. And eventually the employees of the nearby plants. Within five years Roger had a staff and was preparing over 1,800 returns. He was asked to serve as tax commissioner. And then as mayor.

Roger Grein today is a successful businessman, philanthropist and speaker. He is a testimony to what faith and persistence can do, but just as importantly, he is the proof of how a few people can lift a life from the lowest of expectations to the highest in achievement. His angels, he calls them. The ones who extended a loving hand when easily they could have turned away. His adoptive mother. His coach. His teachers. Those first customers who reached out to him.

And that is what Roger Grein talks about. About persistence, yes. And faith in one's self. But mostly he talks about angels and how all of us can, if we consider carefully and act lovingly, make an extraordinary difference in the lives of others.

For a copy of Roger's forthcoming book, or to arrange a speaking engagement, visit www.rogergrein.com, or call (513) 821-9044. You can also write to Roger at 209 W. Benson St., Cincinnati, OH 45215.